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Kernan Awards Teachers Credit Union, South Bend Heritage Grants to Install Energy Efficient Heating Systems

INDIANAPOLIS — Lt. Governor Joe Kernan announced today that the Indiana Department of Commerce has awarded Teachers Credit Union (TCU) and the South Bend Heritage Foundation two Alternative Power & Energy grants.

Administered by Commerce's Energy Policy Division, the grants, which total \$57,032, will be used to install geothermal heat pumps at new credit union branch locations throughout the state.

"We are pleased with the commitment shown by TCU and South Bend Heritage by investing in geothermal heating and cooling systems in so many buildings," said Kernan, who serves as director of the Department of Commerce. "By using the renewable energy present in the earth, these buildings will reduce demand upon the electrical grid, eliminate the need for natural gas, and prevent the emission of thousands of pounds of air pollutants per year."

TCU is planning to build five new branch offices in Indianapolis, Avon, South Bend, Elkhart and Huntington, each of which will have geothermal systems. The \$30,000 Commerce grant will be applied to the sites in Avon and Indianapolis. The South Bend Heritage Foundation, a non-profit group promoting affordable housing in South Bend's inner city neighborhoods, will construct a commercial building in South Bend that will be leased to TCU for a sixth new branch office. South Bend Heritage will receive \$27,032 in assistance to install a geothermal system in this building. MPA architects of South Bend designed all six buildings.

Geothermal heat pumps heat and cool buildings by using the relatively constant temperature of soil or surface water as a heat source or heat sink, which provides heating and cooling for buildings. Through loops of pipe embedded in the ground or in a pond, heat is transferred from a building's interior the outside loop in order to cool, or from the outside loop back into the building to provide warmth. Geothermal systems work much like refrigerators, except that their pump systems are reversible so that the interior spaces can be both heated or cooled.

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By using the ground or a pond to provide thermal energy for the system, the use of conventional energy is greatly reduced. Electricity is needed only to run the pumps that move the heat from place to place. Though more expensive to install than conventional heating and cooling systems, geothermal systems pay for themselves in the long run through decreased energy bills. Because the ultimate source of the thermal used in these systems energy is the sun, geothermal heat pump systems also replace fossil fuels with renewable solar energy, reducing both fossil energy usage and the polluting emissions that they create.

The Alternative Power & Energy Grant Program is administered by Commerce's Energy Policy Division. It offers grants for the installation of renewable energy systems to businesses, institutions, and units of local government in Indiana. The program offers grants of up to \$30,000 or 30% of project costs, whichever is less. For more information about this or any other program administered by Commerce's Energy Policy Division, contact Philip Powlick at 317.232.8940 or visit the Web site www.indianacommerce.com.

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